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21 OCT 1965

BYE-0406-65

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The Honorable Cyrus R. Vance
Deputy Secretary of Defense
Washington, D.C.

Dear Cy:

We have both received a memorandum from Dr. McMillan detailing his proposal for modernization of the existing CIA/SAC U-2 pool and postponement of additional U-2 procurement. Using attrition rates experienced thus far, it would appear that the total U-2 fleet would drop to approximately half of its present strength before new aircraft ordered a year from now would be available, and that the total number would never reach the minimum acceptable level (27) recommended by Generals Ledford and Geary, if the older aircraft are retired as they propose.

I do not wish to prejudge this proposal, but do believe that it deserves our careful consideration in the Executive Committee before implementation, since I anticipate a continuing and perhaps increasing need for U-2 reconnaissance coverage round the world.

Sincerely,

((signed) W. F. Raborn

W. F. Raborn
Director

cc: cy 3 - DCI
cy 4 - DDCI
cy 5 - D/DCI/NIFE

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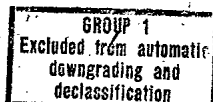
10 SEP 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence**SUBJECT: Background on U-2 Modification/Procurement Program**

1. I would like to provide some background information which I believe would be useful to you regarding Dr. McMillan's proposal to modify SAC U-2 aircraft to the same configuration as Agency aircraft, but delay all procurement of additional U-2 aircraft for at least one year. I regard this situation as serious since this would perpetuate the under-strength condition of the U-2 fleet.
2. The Directors of Programs B and D (Generals Ledford and Geary) outlined their views for additional U-2 aircraft needs in "Future Needs for U-2 Aircraft" BYE 2614-65, 21 June 1965, and made specific cost comparisons of procurement buys, and a recommendation for procurement in "Cost/Procurement of New U-2 Aircraft" BYE 2774-65, 9 August 1965.
3. I have sketched the situation roughly in Figure 1. This shows that the current fleet of 21 aircraft will decrease to approximately 12 by January 1968 if past experience for attrition continues. If an order is placed now, delivery of aircraft would start in March of 1967 and proceed approximately along the dotted green line, and allow the recommended level of 33 aircraft to be realized. If the delay of one year occurs in placing the procurement order, then the build-up of the fleet would occur approximately as indicated by the line designated as McMillan's production option. The shaded area gives some feeling for the difference between desirable fleet size and the condition which would exist if McMillan's recommendation is accepted.
4. Figure 2 presents more detail, and I would be happy to discuss its ramifications with you. I would only like to invite your attention to the proposed retirement of older aircraft beginning in May 1967. Some of these aircraft could be made available to NASA and other interested organizations.

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5. In his memorandum, Dr. McMillan bases his recommendations on an inability to verify unequivocally the requirements for the production of the improved U-2. The assumptions provided by ONE to the Long Range Plan and other factors indicate, however, that the requirements are both real and strong. These include:

- a) The emergence and development of new nations to a state of sophisticated technology is occurring rapidly.
- b) Development of adequate clandestine assets is difficult, time consuming, and vulnerable, and might best be used cooperatively for the near term to verify overhead reconnaissance indications.
- c) The use of U-2 aircraft is feasible against targets in emerging countries since they are usually not well equipped for defense.
- d) The avoidance of defenses is generally feasible as indicated by the continued use of the U-2 over China, Cuba, etc.
- e) Countermeasures equipment is improving.

6. The proposed U-2 production would incorporate several improvements designed to give the U-2 higher performance and greater reliability. In addition, the U-2 aircraft possesses several advantages over other systems cited in McMillan's memorandum:

- a) More responsive than GAMBIT and other satellite systems.
- b) Cheaper and easier to deploy than the OXCART.
- c) Use by NASA, etc., and possible operation by non-U. S. pilots, provides some degree of plausible denial.

7. Procurement of additional U-2 aircraft was considered by the Executive Committee one year ago. I believe that this important issue should now be considered again by the Executive Committee, not only to obtain a decision for additional U-2 procurement but also

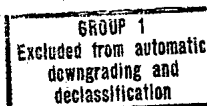
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to exercise the responsibilities of the Executive Committee for providing guidance to the Director, NRO and participating in the formulation of new programs.

STAT

ALBERT D. WHEELON
Deputy Director
for
Science and Technology

Attachments:

- 1 - Figure 1**
- 2 - Figure 2**

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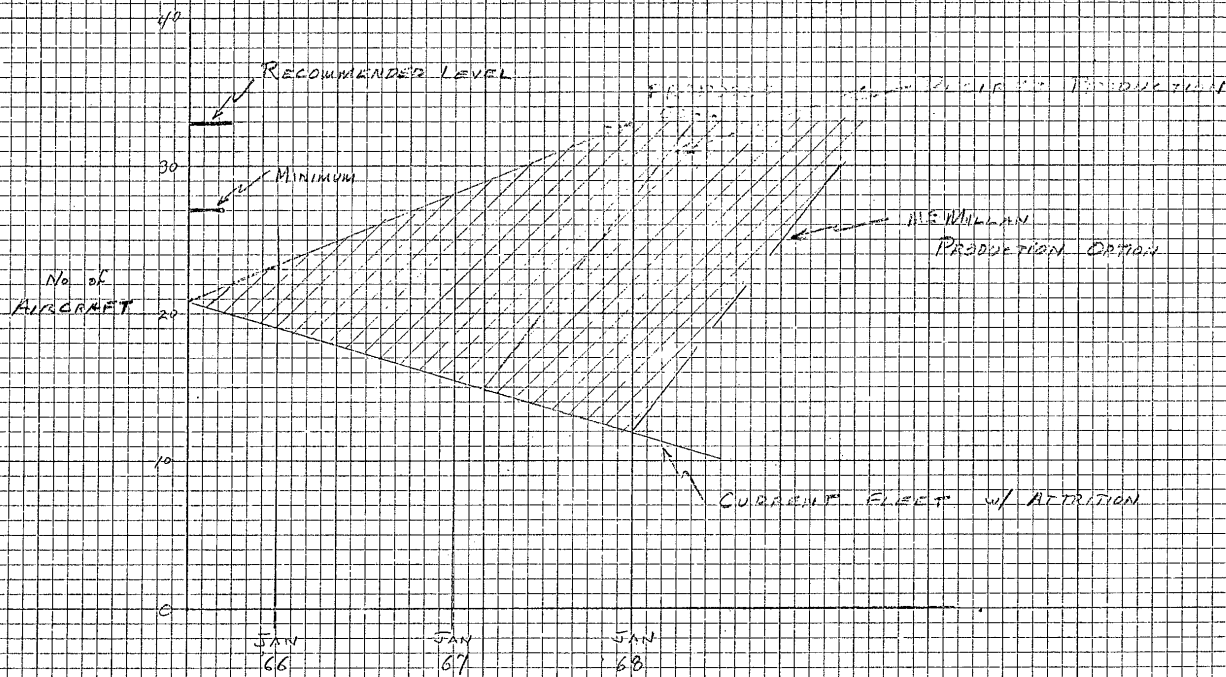


FIGURE 1

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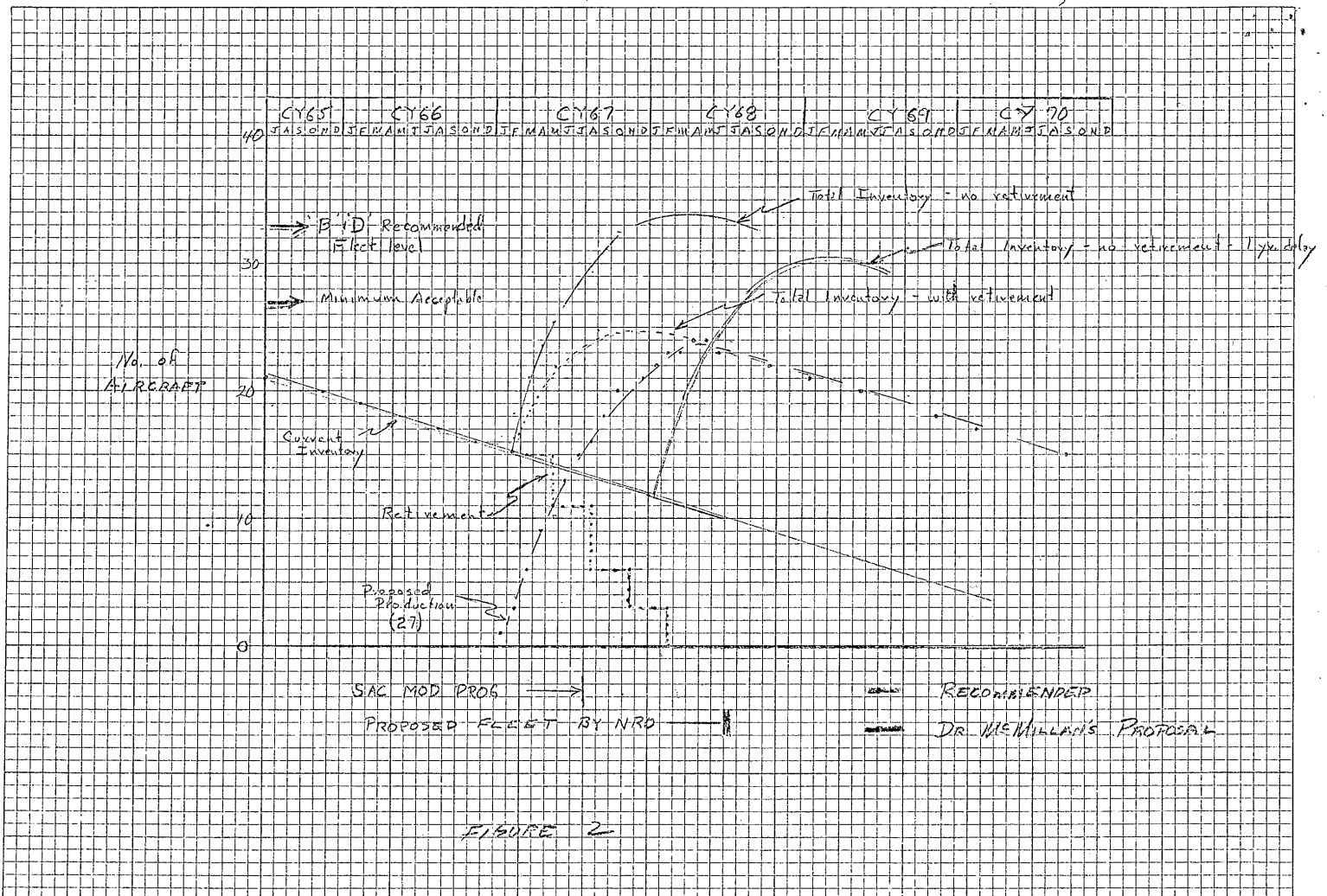


FIGURE 2

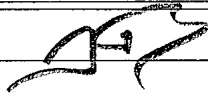
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